

Five Guys Finds Total Solution for Managing Waste Oil and Grease

Frontline International's Smart Oil Management Solutions Help Reduce Oil Usage and Costs While Increasing Profits

Brian Gill looks for solutions. As Equipment and Smallwares Specialist for Five Guys Enterprises, LLC, his equipment decisions must balance equipment costs, store efficiencies, safety and environmental concerns, store footprints, and, most importantly, anything that has an impact on food quality, consistency, and the customer experience. So when the problem of how to safely and profitably collect and dispose of grease and cooking oil arose, Gill set out to look for a solution. He was surprised to find himself in the role of trailblazer, so he was thankful to find an equipment-manufacturing partner — Frontline International, a pioneer in the cooking oil management arena — who would be flexible and willing to innovate to help Gill with his challenge.

The challenge was the grill grease. There were readily available equipment solutions for collecting cooking oil from fryers, but to give up valuable floor space to a waste management system that addressed only part of the problem was a non-starter. “If we put one of those systems in place, we’d still have employees having to port grill grease to a dumpster in the back. That’s not a fun job, and I was convinced we could come up with a total solution.”

Frontline’s waste oil management system was unique; it was modular and adaptable, and Gill could work with product design engineers to achieve vast improvements over Five Guys’ previous systems. This is, in part, because Frontline has a niche position in this category: they are not an oil-rendering company with a business model focused solely on obtaining used oil for further processing opportunities, but instead are an equipment manufacturer that provides innovative, modular systems for oil storage, filtration, and collection. Previously, Five Guys had difficulty finding a vendor to provide a system that could filter and collect both fryer and griddle oil. Frontline delivered.

“My job is to find equipment solutions that can make people happy at all levels of the organization,” said Gill. “Put simply, employee satisfaction is critical. When employees are happy, franchise operations can run more smoothly. This oil management system improved the store-level user experience while saving time and money and improving safety. Everyone was happy with it.”

In locations without Frontline’s system in place, grease has to be collected and carried to dumpsters in the back of the restaurant, a messy and potentially dangerous venture that displeases not only employees, but also landlords who wish to manage risk of injury and spills on their property. Further, dumpsters are vulnerable to theft, and don’t come with Frontline’s anti-theft locking system — unique in the industry.

With the setup chosen for Five Guys, fryer oil is directly plumbed into internally housed storage containment tanks, and grill grease is collected via a caddy system with heated lines to keep the grease from coagulating. The caddy easily wheels to the containment tank, where a hose is attached and grease is pumped — hands-free and no-touch, minimizing risk to employees and owner-operators.

The direct-plumbed fryer option is “the most beautiful part of the system,” says Gill, who also praises the caddy as a unique solution to the grill grease issue, one not addressed by other vendors. “Most recyclers’ equipment can only accommodate fryer oil, leaving us to collect the grease separately,” says Gill. “Frontline helped us solve that problem with a system specifically for us.”

Five Guys now has the ability to train staff on the singular system across all locations nationally instead of having to train employees on several different systems. And an otherwise challenging kitchen job is now easily handled with the push of a button.

“The stores are excited. Frontline’s systems are being built into a lot of our new franchises,” said Gill. “Operations can still choose who they want for rendering, and Frontline even has a smaller tank option for when we have a smaller location, which is nice. But more importantly, the oil is secure, and there is more control of the waste oil process, since the whole system is computerized — so all usage, collections, and rebates are trackable.”

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Gill also estimates that Frontline's solution is much less expensive than purchasing a tank directly from a renderer — as much as 30 percent less. Sometimes "free" tank costs can be hidden inside reduced oil rebates. With the oil collection and storage equipment provided by Frontline, that's no longer an issue, and full rebates can be realized.

"There's a whole game there with competing oil collection companies that offer you equipment for free as long as they get the oil. But the problem is the price seems to be inflated a bit, and you never seem to finish paying," said Gill. "With Frontline, you buy the equipment up front and then control your own rebates."

Several area managers are actively trying to get Frontline's systems incorporated into as many of their locations as possible. And why not, Gill said, as there is a big upside. "We really are an operations-driven company, and we don't go in telling these guys what to do and what to buy. We make recommendations, and this is one they really seem to like."

Gill went on to explain why area operations managers favor this system. "We don't have to deal with theft, spills, or burns. We don't have landlords upset with us, and we don't have a grease dumpster outside to manage," explained Gill. It's a win-win for Five Guys.

Frontline International's Smart Oil Management program with Five Guys is relatively new, with installation in approximately 30 Five Guys locations. Each new store has the system as part of a recommended equipment package. Gill continuously looks for solutions to improve operations at the existing 380-plus corporate-owned stores and more than 800 individually franchised Five Guys locations nationwide.

Safer, more employee-friendly operations solutions through Frontline's waste oil management system is a natural fit with Five Guys' high-quality business model: hand-formed burgers, fresh-cut fries, and freshly baked buns. Fresh food and a clean store means happy employees and satisfied customers.

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About Frontline International

Frontline International, Inc. designs, manufactures, and distributes superior commercial foodservice equipment for the storage, handling, and disposal of cooking oil. With Frontline, you own your own equipment, negotiate your own oil rebates, and have the freedom to choose your own oil vendors. Frontline and its Smart Oil Management systems offer users more freedom and more control over their processes and their profits. For more information, contact Frontline International, Inc. at 187 Ascot Parkway, Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44223. Phone: +1 330-861-1100. Toll free: 1-877-776-1100. Web: <http://www.frontlineii.com>. Email: info@frontlineii.com.